
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5497

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Holmquist, Rasmussen, Oemig, Pridemore, Zarelli, Weinstein, Eide, Hobbs, Keiser, Fraser, Hewitt, Tom, Kauffman, Clements, Hargrove, Kilmer, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Shin; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction)

READ FIRST TIME 02/08/07.

1 AN ACT Relating to dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval;
2 adding new sections to chapter 28A.175 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature that
5 increasing academic success and increasing graduation rates be dual
6 goals for the K-12 system. The legislature finds that only seventy-
7 four percent of the class of 2005 graduated on time. Students of
8 color, students living in poverty, students in foster care, students in
9 the juvenile justice system, students who are homeless, students for
10 whom English is not their primary language, and students with
11 disabilities have lower graduation rates than the average. The
12 legislature further finds that students who drop out experience more
13 frequent occurrences of early pregnancy, delinquency, substance abuse,
14 and mental health issues, and have greater need of publicly funded
15 health and social services. The legislature further finds that helping
16 all students be successful in school requires active participation in
17 coordinating services from schools, parents, and other stakeholders and
18 agencies in the local community. The legislature finds that existing
19 resources to vulnerable youth are used more efficiently and effectively

1 when there is significant coordination across local and state entities.
2 The legislature further finds that efficiency and accountability of the
3 K-12 system would be improved by creating a dropout prevention and
4 intervention grant program that implements research-based and emerging
5 best practices and evaluates results.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Subject to the availability of funds
7 appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of
8 public instruction shall create a grant program to local partnerships
9 of schools, families, and communities to begin the phase in of a
10 statewide comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval
11 system. This program shall be known as the building bridges program.
12 For purposes of sections 2 through 7 of this act, a "building bridges
13 program" means a local partnership of schools, families, and
14 communities that provides all of the following programs or activities:

15 (1) A system that identifies individual students at risk of
16 dropping out from middle through high school based on local predictive
17 data, including state assessment data starting in the fourth grade, and
18 provides timely interventions for such students and for dropouts,
19 including a plan for educational success as already required by the
20 student learning plan as defined under RCW 28A.655.061. Students
21 identified shall include foster care youth and youth involved in the
22 juvenile justice system;

23 (2) Coaches or mentors for students as necessary;

24 (3) Staff responsible for coordination of community partners that
25 provide a seamless continuum of academic and nonacademic support in
26 schools and communities;

27 (4) Retrieval or reentry activities; and

28 (5) Alternative educational programming, including, but not limited
29 to, career and technical education preparatory programs and online
30 learning opportunities.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The office of the superintendent of public
32 instruction shall:

33 (1) Identify criteria for grants and evaluate proposals for funding
34 in consultation with the workforce training and education coordinating
35 board;

36 (2) Develop and monitor requirements for grant recipients to:

1 (a) Identify their own strengths and gaps in services provided to
2 youth;

3 (b) Set their own local goals for program outcomes;

4 (c) Use research-based and emerging best practices that lead to
5 positive outcomes in implementing the building bridges program; and

6 (d) Coordinate an outreach campaign to bring public and private
7 organizations together and to provide information about the building
8 bridges program to the local community;

9 (3) In setting the requirements under subsection (2) of this
10 section, encourage creativity and provide for flexibility in
11 implementing the local building bridges program;

12 (4) Develop dropout retrieval programs that school districts shall
13 make available to students who both fail the Washington assessment of
14 student learning and drop out of school. The office of the
15 superintendent of public instruction shall require school districts to
16 make an effort to identify eligible students;

17 (5) Identify and disseminate successful practices;

18 (6) Develop requirements for grant recipients to collect and report
19 data, including, but not limited to:

20 (a) The number of and demographics of students served including,
21 but not limited to, information regarding a student's race and
22 ethnicity, a student's household income, a student's housing status,
23 whether a student is a foster or youth involved in the juvenile justice
24 system, whether a student is disabled, and the primary language spoken
25 at a student's home;

26 (b) Washington assessment of student learning scores;

27 (c) Dropout rates;

28 (d) On-time graduation rates;

29 (e) Extended graduation rates;

30 (f) Credentials obtained;

31 (g) Absenteeism rates;

32 (h) Truancy rates; and

33 (i) Credit retrieval;

34 (7) Contract with a third party to evaluate the infrastructure and
35 implementation of the partnership including the leveraging of outside
36 resources that relate to the goal of the partnership; and

37 (8) Report to the legislature by December 1, 2008.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** In awarding the grants under section 3 of
2 this act, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
3 prioritize schools or districts with dropout rates and truancy rates
4 above the statewide average and shall attempt to award building bridges
5 program grants to different geographic regions of the state. Eligible
6 recipients shall be one of the following entities acting as a lead
7 agency for the local partnership: A school district, a tribal school,
8 an area workforce development council, an educational service district,
9 an accredited institution of higher education, a vocational skills
10 center, a federally recognized tribe, a community organization, or a
11 nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. If the recipient is not a school
12 district, at least one school district must be identified within the
13 partnership.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** To be eligible for a grant under section 3
15 of this act, grant applicants shall:

16 (1) Build or demonstrate a commitment to building a broad-based
17 partnership of schools, families, and community members to provide an
18 effective and efficient building bridges program. The partnership
19 shall consider an effective model for school-community partnerships and
20 include local membership from, but not limited to, school districts,
21 tribal schools, secondary career and technical education programs,
22 skill centers that serve the local community, an educational service
23 district, the area workforce development council, accredited
24 institutions of higher education, tribes or other cultural
25 organizations, the parent teacher association, the juvenile court,
26 prosecutors and defenders, the local health department, health care
27 agencies, public transportation agencies, local division
28 representatives of the department of social and health services,
29 businesses, city or county government agencies, civic organizations,
30 and appropriate youth-serving community-based organizations.
31 Interested parents and students shall be actively included whenever
32 possible;

33 (2) Demonstrate how the grant will enhance any dropout prevention
34 and intervention programs and services already in place in the
35 district;

36 (3) Provide a twenty-five percent match that may include in-kind
37 resources from within the partnership;

- 1 (4) Track and report data required by the grant; and
- 2 (5) Describe how the dropout prevention, intervention, and
- 3 retrieval system will be sustained after initial funding, including
- 4 roles of each of the partners.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Educational service districts, in
6 collaboration with area workforce development councils, shall:

- 7 (1) Provide training to local partnerships established under a
- 8 grant awarded under section 3 of this act on subjects such as cultural
- 9 competency, identifying diverse learning styles, and collecting and
- 10 using performance data;
- 11 (2) Assist school districts and their partners in identifying
- 12 effective intervention strategies for students at risk for dropping
- 13 out; and
- 14 (3) Provide training to assist in the design of functional
- 15 sustainability plans including the identification of potential funding
- 16 sources for future operation.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The office of the superintendent of
18 public instruction shall establish a state-level work group that
19 includes K-12 and state agencies that work with youth who have dropped
20 out or are at risk of dropping out of school. The state-level
21 leadership group shall consist of one representative from each of the
22 following agencies and organizations: The workforce training and
23 education coordinating board; career and technical education including
24 skill centers; relevant divisions of the department of social and
25 health services; the juvenile courts; the Washington association of
26 prosecuting attorneys; the Washington state office of public defense;
27 the employment security department; accredited institutions of higher
28 education; the educational service districts; the area workforce
29 development councils; parent and educator associations; the department
30 of health; local school districts; community organizations serving
31 youth; federally recognized tribes and urban tribal centers; and the
32 minority commissions.

- 33 (2) To assist and enhance the work of the building bridges programs
- 34 established in section 5 of this act, the state-level work group shall:
- 35 (a) Identify and make recommendations to the legislature for the

1 reduction of fiscal, legal, and regulatory barriers that prevent
2 coordination of program resources across agencies at the state and
3 local level;

4 (b) Develop and track performance measures and benchmarks for each
5 partner agency or organization across the state; and

6 (c) Identify research-based and emerging best practices regarding
7 prevention, intervention, and retrieval programs.

8 (3) The work group shall report to the legislature and the governor
9 on an annual basis beginning December 1, 2007, with recommendations for
10 implementing emerging best practices, needed additional resources, and
11 eliminating barriers.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 2 through 7 of this act are each
13 added to chapter 28A.175 RCW.

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